

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 74, as follows:

As a result of ~~researches~~research carried out repeatedly to attain the foregoing object, the present inventors discovered that when a portion smaller in basis weight was provided in the exhaust-gas-inlet-side end surface of a holding material, the wind erosion effect of exhaust gas could be reduced while a catalyst carrier could be held by the other portion in the same manner as in the conventional art. Thus, the invention was completed.

Please amend the heading at page 4, line 94, as follows:

BRIEF ~~DESCRIPTION~~DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 146, as follows:

Alternatively, the low basis weight area A may be formed so that the basis weight is the smallest in the exhaust-gas-inlet-side end portion 3a and increases continuously toward the high basis weight area B as shown with varied dot density in Fig. 1. In this case, the average basis weight of the low basis weight area A is regarded as the basis weight of the low basis weight area A and selected to be in the aforementioned range.